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SUBJECT: Distribution of Cow Evaluation Data in February 1997

TO: Recipients of Cow Evaluation Data

FROM: H.D. Norman, Research Leader, AIPL

*H. Duane Norman*

As announced by the Animal Improvement Programs Laboratory (AIPL) in August 1996, genetic evaluation data for cows will be distributed in format 105N beginning in February 1997. In addition to the new format, some changes will be made in the selection criteria for generating the files and in the method for distributing various data sets. All formats mentioned in this memorandum can be obtained through the AIPL home page (<http://aipl.arsusda.gov>).

a. **Cow evaluations for breed associations.** No change has been made in the method used to select data for these files.

b. **Cow evaluations for dairy records processing centers (DRPC's).** The method of distributing cow evaluation data for DRPC's has changed. The DRPC's will receive cow evaluations based on the DRPC code in the last record received for the herd by the deadline for receipt of data. In addition, a DRPC will receive cow evaluations for all herds in a State if that DRPC processes 30% or more of the herds in the State. To allow DRPC's to access evaluation data for other cows, a new query program is being developed to search evaluation data by cow number and then generate a format 105N, which can be downloaded. A link to the query program is expected to be available on the AIPL home page by February 11, 1997.

c. **Daughter evaluations for artificial-insemination (AI) bulls.** Artificial-insemination organizations that request daughter evaluations for their bulls will receive data for daughters of bulls with a status code of A or L and born within the last 11 years and daughters of AI bulls with other codes and born within the last 8 years. This selection criteria is the same as imposed for bull evaluation and daughter lists for AI organizations.

d. **Cow evaluations for the top 10% of the cows (based on percentile for net merit dollars).** This file will be offered only in a 323-byte length. The herd-owner name-and-address record no longer will be included in the evaluation file. Instead, these data will be in a separate file in format 2N. ***Both the evaluation and the name-and address files will be offered only via internet using file transfer protocol (FTP).*** These files will be compressed and password protected. A unique password will be assigned to limit access to the name-and-address file. Contact AIPL after the release for this password.

Information still is needed from some breed associations, DRPC's, and AI organizations on which record length they would like to receive. The default record length for breed, DRPC, and AI daughter files is 298 bytes. If you would prefer one of the other two record lengths available or your data recorded on 3490 cartridges, please contact Leigh Walton (lwalt@aipl.arsusda.gov) by **January 21, 1997**.

After February 1997, AIPL plans to discontinue distributing genetic evaluation data on round-reel magnetic tapes. Use of the internet is preferred for data exchange. For large files that are not well suited for electronic download, 3480 and 3490 cartridges, 4- and 8-mm tapes, and ISO 9660 standard CD-ROM's are available. The recordable CD's cost about \$8 each and generally are suitable for single use only. Therefore, if you prefer this medium for data exchange, you will be required to supply blank CD's. Please contact Leigh Walton for assistance in selecting and testing the medium that will work best for your organization.